



## **GROUP ICE BREAKER**

What is the first book you remember reading?

## **REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS**

What, if any, next step did you commit to last week? How did it go?

- I will check my focus in light of a Christ-centered life and refocus where necessary.
- I will change actions that come from selfish motives to selfless motives.
- I will commit to creating a legacy that honors God and embraces his love for me.
- I will take a next step of faith in Jesus.

## **MESSAGE SUMMARY**

Here is a truth about all of us: we were trapped on an island of sin and death, and God's word, the Bible, tells us how to get home. The Bible exists so that you can be spiritually transformed. However, spiritual growth will always require effort.

How can we begin reading the Bible not just for our information, but our transformation? The first thing is we must place ourselves under the authority of the Bible. If the Bible does its job in us, our minds will be so transformed, we will be so filled with thoughts and feelings of truth and love and joy and humility that our lives will become one uninterrupted series of acts of grace and moral beauty.

The second is we must wash our minds with the Word. When we come to God, sometimes our minds and hearts are cluttered with false beliefs, wrong attitudes, impure feelings, and unhealthy motives. There are a couple practical things we can do to better know the Bible. The first is: read with readiness to obey God. Before you read it, resolve that you're going to be obedient to what God teaches you. The second is: Don't try to read a lot of scripture in one sitting. The third is: Take one thought, word or phrase and live with it deeply.

We must immerse ourselves enough in the word that we can actually live with it and be transformed by it.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Acts 2, Peter was able to understand what was happening and respond to the people because he was so immersed in Scripture. What habit(s) have you established that immerse you in Scripture? What habit(s) might you be challenged to begin?
2. Have you had an experience of reading or hearing Scripture read that lead to a feeling God was speaking directly to you? Share with the group your experience.
3. Read 2 Timothy 3:16. How would you define or explain the “authority of the Bible” to someone? What authority have you given the Bible in your life?
4. Read John 5:37-40. Knowledge of Scripture is not a guarantee of knowing God. What characteristics have you seen or experienced from someone who knew, but had failed to be transformed by Scripture? How can you safeguard against this kind of failure?
5. In Ephesians 5:25–26, Paul describes Scripture like water that cleanses. Read Hebrews 4:12. How does this passage relate in the context of the work of Scripture within us?
6. Read Luke 11:28. Jesus says hearing should lead to obedience which will result in blessing. Think of a time you experienced this in your life and share it with the group.

## **NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK (COMMIT TO GROW)**

Use these as a guide to take your next step and commit to what you learned this week:

- I will place my life under the authority of the Bible.
- I will ask God to form me spiritually as I read Scripture.
- I will ask God to wash my mind with the Word.
- I will read with a readiness to obey God.
- I will reflect on Scripture in order to transform my mind.

## **SCRIPTURE REFERENCES**

- Acts 2:42
- Acts 2:16-18
- Acts 6:1-4
- Acts 8:27-35
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- John 5:38-40
- Ephesians 5:25-27
- Psalm 1:2-3
- Psalm 119:97
- Jeremiah 15:16